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of the plurality of printers in order to print the image data at the printer into which the user input the input job number.--

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-8 are pending, Claims 1-4, and 8 having been amended by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-8 were rejected as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,843,571 to Notermans et al in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,825,988 to Collard et al.

First, Applicants wish to thank Examiner Popovici and Supervisory Patent Examiner Coles for the personal interview of April 3, 2001 at which time the outstanding issues in the present case were discussed. During the discussion, Applicant presented arguments and amendments substantially as indicated in the present amendment. While no agreement was reached, Examiner Popovici indicated that amendments to the claims that clarify a plurality of printers, wherein a user can go to any one printer to input the job number in order to print the print job at the selected printer would overcome the reference to Notermans et al.

In order to expedite issuance of a patent in this case, Claims 1-4, and 8 have been amended to recite a plurality of printers and that a user can input said job number into any one of the plurality of printers in order to print the image data at the printer into which the user input the job number, as suggested by Examiner Popovici. In contrast, as discussed in detail in the April 4, 2001 interview, both Notermans and Collard disclose a system wherein a single printer is connected to a plurality of network terminals. Moreover, these references do not teach or

suggest that a user can input said job number into any one of the plurality of printers in order to print the image data at the printer into which the user input the job number. Thus, Claims 1-4 and 8 as presently amended patentably define over Notermans and Collard. Moreover, as, Claims 5-7 depend from independent Claim 4, these claims also patentably define over the cited references.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, and in light of the above comments, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 1-8, as amended, is patentably distinguishing over the prior art. The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 1-4, and 8 as follows:

--1. (Four Times Amended) A network print system comprising:

a computer terminal having,

a processor,

a computer user interface, and

a computer display, said processor being configured to produce a print request message in response to information provided through said computer user interface, said print request message containing image data, and said print request message not uniquely identifying a device for printing said image data;

[at least one printer] a plurality of printers communicatively coupled to said computer terminal, said [at least one printer] plurality of printers each having a printer user interface with a data input device and a data display device; and

a host computer communicatively coupled to said [at least one printer] plurality of printers and said computer terminal and configured to receive said print request message, said host computer having

a memory in which said image data is stored, and

a host computer processor configured to produce a job number associated with said print request message and send said job number to said computer terminal, wherein

said computer terminal being configured to display on said display an indication of said job number provided by said host computer,

said host processor being configured to recognize when said job number is input to a particular printer of said [at least one printer] plurality of printers via said printer user interface and configured to, based on said job number input, associate said particular printer

with said print request message and identify the particular printer as the printer for receiving the print request message, and provide said image data to said identified particular printer for printing so that a user can input said job number into any one of the plurality of printers in order to print the image data at the printer into which the user input the job number.

2. (Four Times Amended) A network print system comprising:

a computer terminal having,

a processor,

a computer user interface configured to receive a password entered by a user, and

a computer display, said processor being configured to produce a print request message containing image data and said password, said print request message not uniquely identifying a device for printing said image data;

[at least one printer] a plurality of printers communicatively coupled to said computer terminal, said [at least one printer] plurality of printers each having a printer user interface with a data input device and a data display device; and

a host computer communicatively coupled to said [at least one printer] plurality of printers and said computer terminal, and configured to receive said print request message, said host computer having

a memory in which said image data and said password are stored, and

a host computer processor configured to produce a job number associated with said print request message, store said job number in said memory in association with said image data and password, and send said job number to said computer terminal, wherein

said computer terminal being configured to display on said display an indication of said job number provided by said host computer, and

said host processor being configured to recognize when said job number and password are input to a particular printer of said [at least one printer] plurality of printers via said printer user interface and configured to, based on said job number input, associate said particular printer with said print request message and identify the particular printer as the printer for receiving the print request message and provide said image data to said identified particular printer for printing so that a user can input said job number and password into any one of the plurality of printers in order to print the image data at the printer into which the user input the job number and password.

3. (Four Times Amended) A network print system comprising:

a computer terminal having,

a processor,

a computer user interface, and

a computer display, said processor being configured to produce a print request message containing image data, said print request message not uniquely identifying a device for printing said image data;

[at least one printer] a plurality of printers coupled to said computer terminal, [said at least one] each printer having

a printer user interface with a data input device and a data display device, and

a printer memory configured to hold a user password,

a host computer coupled to said [at least one printer] plurality of printers and said computer terminal, and configured to receive said print request message, said host computer having

a host computer memory in which said image data is stored, and

a host computer processor configured to produce a job number associated with said print request message, store said job number in said host computer memory in association with said image data, and send said job number to said computer terminal, wherein

said computer terminal being configured to display on said display an indication of said job number provided by said host computer,

at least one of said host computer and said [at least one printer] plurality of printers being configured to determine if an input data input through said printer user interface of a particular printer of said [at least one printer] plurality of printers matches said job number, and if so, to associate said particular printer with said print request message, identify the particular printer as the printer for receiving the print request message and provide said image data to said particular printer,

each of said [at least one printer] plurality of printers being configured to determine whether a password input via said printer user interface matches said password stored in said printer memory and if so printing a document corresponding to said image data so that a user can input said input data and password into any one of the plurality of printers in order to print the image data at the printer into which the user input the input data and password.

4. (Four Times Amended) A secure method for printing a document in a network print system having a plurality of printers, comprising the steps of:

receiving an image data at a first network terminal;

producing a print request message at said first network terminal and sending said print request message and said image data to a second network terminal said print request message not uniquely identifying a device for printing said image data;

storing in memory said image data and an associated job number at said second network terminal;

sending a reply message to said first network terminal from said second network terminal, said reply message including said associated job number;

displaying said associated job number at said first network terminal;

receiving a local print request message at said second network terminal from a particular printer of [at least one printer] said plurality of printers, said local request message having an input job number; and

comparing said input job number with said associated job number and if said input job number matches said associated job number, associating said particular printer with said print request message and identifying the particular printer as the printer for receiving the print request message, and printing from said identified particular printer a document corresponding to said image data so that a user can input said input job number into any one of the plurality of printers in order to print the image data at the printer into which the user input the input job number.

8. (Four Times Amended)A secure network print system having a plurality of printers, comprising:

means for receiving an image data at a first network terminal;

means for producing a print request message not uniquely identifying a device for printing said image data at said first network terminal and for sending said print request message and said image data to a second network terminal;

means for storing in memory said image data and an associated job number at said second network terminal;

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means for sending a reply message to said first network terminal from said second network terminal, said reply message including said associated job number;

means for displaying said associated job number at said first network terminal;

means for inputting a local print request message at a particular printer of said plurality of printers, said local request message having an input job number;

means for sending said local print request message to said second network terminal; and

means for comparing said input job number with said associated job number and if said input job number matches said associated job number associating said printer with said print request message identifying the particular printer as the printer for receiving the print request message, and printing from said identified particular printer a document corresponding to said image data so that a user can input said input job number into any one of the plurality of printers in order to print the image data at the printer into which the user input the input job number.--